



## ARTICLES

Use **a/an** with singular countable nouns meaning “one, some”.

- often after “to be”, “to have” and “there is”

Use **the** with concrete/specific/unique nouns.

Use **“zero article”** with plural nouns and uncountable nouns when the reference is general.

### “a”

- before **SINGULAR COUNTABLE nouns** when mentioned for the first time, meaning “one”, “some”:  
*I bought **a** chair.*
- after *to be*, *have got*, *there is* when describing sb/st: *It's **a** nice day. I've got **a** brother. There's **a** painting by Picasso.*
- with professions: *She's **a** head teacher. (BUT She's **the** head teacher of Park School) .*
- with a unit of measurement: *three times **a** day, once **a** week*
- in exclamations: *What **a** lovely day!*

### “the”

- before SG and PL **countable nouns** + **uncountable nouns** when we refer to
  - o **a specific/concrete thing**: *I'll wear **the** dress I bought last week.*
  - o a particular/concrete place, person, animal, thing and the listener knows about it: ***The** postman has been already here. Your keys are in **the** kitchen.*
  - o **unique things, objects...**: **the** world, **the** sun, **the** weather, **the** American Civil War
  - o groups of people (collective nouns): **the** British, **the** Italians, **the** police, **the** government, **the** public, **the** army
- before
  - o adjectives referring to a group of people: **the** rich, **the** poor, **the** unemployed, **the** disabled
  - o parts of the day: in **the** morning, in **the** afternoon, in **the** evening
  - o names of ships, newspapers and magazines and some musical groups: **The** Victoria, **The** Times, **The** Economist, **The** Czech Philharmonic Choir
  - o superlatives and ordinals: **the** best film, for **the** third time
  - o names of musical instruments: Can you play **the** violin? (BUT I've just bought **a** new guitar.)
  - o “water” names: oceans, seas, rivers, water-falls: **the** Indian Ocean, **the** River Zambezi (BUT LAKES – zero article: e.g. Moraine Lake, Lake Louise)
  - o geographical terms: groups of islands, islands called “The Isle of...”, mountain ranges, deserts, regions: **the** Bahamas, **the** Himalaya, **the** Sahara, **the** Arctic
  - o few names of countries: **the** USA, **the** Netherlands, **the** Ukraine, **the** Philippines, **the** Sudan, **the** United Arab Emirates, **the** Ivory Coast...

**“zero article”**

- before **PLURAL NOUNS and SINGULAR UNCOUNTABLE NOUNS in general sense:**
  - o **Books** are very important to me. BUT: Do you have **the** books I've lent you?
- with proper nouns: to Paris, on Friday
- with meals: Have you had breakfast yet?
- with *school, class, college, university, home, work, church, bed, hospital, prison, town*: Danny's gone to bed. Peter is in prison. (BUT There isn't a church in **the** village.)
- with **by** + transport: by train
- with **next/last** + week etc., days of the week....: next Monday, next time

**PRACTICE**

**Complete the sentences below with -, a/an or the.**

- 1) "What do you do?" -- "I'm \_\_\_\_\_ teacher."
- 2) Where do you go to \_\_\_\_\_ school?
- 3) He's from \_\_\_\_\_ USA.
- 4) Have you read \_\_\_\_\_ book which I gave you last month?
- 5) The journey only takes about \_\_\_\_\_ hour.
- 6) He's very lonely. He doesn't have \_\_\_\_\_ friends.
- 7) Susan works in \_\_\_\_\_ London.
- 8) "Did you see Terminator 3 on TV last night?" -- "Yes, it was \_\_\_\_\_ awesome movie."
- 9) "Did you lock \_\_\_\_\_ door?" -- "Oh I forgot!"
- 10) Can I speak to Nicky, please? -- Yes, hold on. She's in \_\_\_\_\_ garden.
- 11) "What's your favourite food?" -- "I like \_\_\_\_\_ spaghetti."
- 12) "Where are you from?" -- "I'm from \_\_\_\_\_ Czech Republic."
- 13) I usually go to school by \_\_\_\_\_ bike.
- 14) "Where's Jimmy?" -- "He's waiting in \_\_\_\_\_ car."
- 15) "Can I borrow your calculator?" -- "Sure, but \_\_\_\_\_ display is broken."
- 16) Do you think he can play \_\_\_\_\_ trumpet?
- 17) "Hello, could I speak to \_\_\_\_\_ manager, please?"
- 18) Look at \_\_\_\_\_ sky! It's going to rain!
- 19) She's bought \_\_\_\_\_ new car. She drives a Mercedes now.
- 20) Rhode Island is \_\_\_\_\_ American state.
- 21) \_\_\_\_\_ Atlantic Ocean is the most polluted ocean in the world.
- 22) We were supposed to write an essay on The Picture of Dorian Gray, but I didn't find \_\_\_\_\_ book in the library.
- 23) Can you please go to \_\_\_\_\_ grocery store on Fifth Street and buy 2 cartons of milk?
- 24) \_\_\_\_\_ people seem to be always in a hurry these days.
- 25) I want to buy \_\_\_\_\_ laptop computer next week.

- ⇒ **Never use “a/an” with plural nouns.**
- ⇒ **When specifying: use “the + noun + of”:** the price of gold; the size of these particles...  
BUT X There is a lack of/ a shortage of resources....  
X Supporters of free trade point out that...
- ⇒ **Don't use articles when referring to figures or tables:**  
The increasing tendency is illustrated in **Fig. 5**.  
**Table 2** lists the applied indicators.